

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/790,332

Examiner

Quang N. Nguyen

Applicant(s)

ZHU ET AL.

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2141

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the RCE filed on 10/24/06.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-17 and 19.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☐ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____


RUPAL DHARIA
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Examiner's Amendment

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

2. Authorization for this Examiner's Amendment was given in a telephone interview with the Applicant's Representative, Mr. John W. Branch (Reg. No. 41,633), on October 26th, 2006.

3. Please amend claims 1 and 19 as below:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A method for filtering messages for a node on a network, comprising:

determining an adaptive cut-off radius for a community based in part on a rate of growth for membership in the community that is separated by a first degree of separation, wherein a cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off radius is adapted to be relatively large if the rate of growth is relatively high, and wherein the cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off radius is adapted to be relatively small if the rate of growth is relatively low;

determining a degree of separation between each of a plurality of nodes that are associated with a first node, wherein the first node and at least a portion of the

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associated plurality of nodes are granted membership in the community based on a number of degrees of separation between the first node and a second node in the community, and wherein the granting of membership in the community is limited by at least the adaptive cut-off radius for the community;

determining a level of trust for the first node in the community based on the number of degrees of separation between the first node and another node in the community; and

if a message is received by the first node in the community from the other node in the community, employing the level of trust associated with the other node to determine if the message is to be delivered to at least one trusted folder associated with the first node.

Claim 19. (Currently Amended) A computer processor readable storage media that includes executable data and program code that are executable by a computer processor for performing actions for filtering messages for a node on a network, comprising:

determining an adaptive cut-off radius for a community based in part on a rate of growth for membership in the community that is separated by a first degree of separation, wherein a cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off radius is adapted to be relatively large if the rate of growth is relatively high, and wherein the cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off radius is adapted to be relatively small if the rate of growth is relatively low;

determining a degree of separation between each of a plurality of nodes that are associated with a first node, wherein the first node and at least a portion of the associated plurality of nodes are granted membership in the community based on a number of degrees of separation between the first node and a second node in the community, and wherein the granting of membership in the community is controlled by at least the adaptive cut-off radius for the community;

determining a level of trust for the first node in the community based on the number of degrees of separation between the first node and another node in the community; and

if a message is received by the first node in the community from the other node in the community, ~~[[for]]~~ employing the level of trust associated with the other node to determine if the message is to be delivered to at least one trusted folder associated with the first node.

4. Claims 1-17 and 19 are allowed.

5. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

In interpreting the claims, in light of the specification (see Specification, page 9, lines 6-12 and page 12, lines 6-15) and the applicant's arguments filed on 06/06/2006 (see pages 9-10) and on 09/21/2006 (see page 9), the Examiner finds the claimed invention to be patentably distinct from the prior art of records.

Ingerman et al. (US 2004/0255122 A1), teach a system and method for categorizing electronic messages based on trust between electronic messaging entities, wherein messaging servers maintain trust lists indicating levels of trust between electronic messaging entities. Based on information in a trust list and, when appropriate, information in an active store, a messaging server can categorize an accessed electronic message, such as, for example, as unwanted and/or unsolicited. Messaging servers can securely exchange trust list information to increase the possibility of identifying a level of trust between messaging entities, even between messaging entities that have not previously exchanged electronic messages (**Ingerman, Abstract and paragraphs [0014 - 0020] and [0048 – 0058]**).

McCormick et al. (US 6,023,723), teach a method and system for filtering unwanted junk email utilizing a plurality of filtering mechanisms, wherein the user is provided with a list of email addresses or character strings which the user would not wish to receive to produce a first filter. A second filter is provided including names and character strings which the user wishes to receive. Any email addresses or strings contained in the first filter will be automatically eliminated from the user's system. Any email addresses or strings contained in the second filter would be automatically sent to the user's "In Box". Any email not provided in either of the filter lists will be sent to a "Waiting Room" for user review (**McCormick, Abstract, col. 4, line 7 – col. 5, line 55**).

However, the prior art of records fail to teach or suggest individually or in combination that a computer system and method filtering messages for a node on a network, comprising: **determining an adaptive cut-off radius for a community based**

in part on a rate of growth for membership in the community that is separated by a first degree of separation, wherein a cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off radius is adapted to be relatively large if the rate of growth is relatively high, and wherein the cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off radius is adapted to be relatively small if the rate of growth is relatively low; determining a degree of separation between each of a plurality of nodes that are associated with a first node, wherein the first node and at least a portion of the associated plurality of nodes are granted membership in the community based on a number of degrees of separation between the first node and a second node in the community, and wherein the granting of membership in the community is limited by at least the adaptive cut-off radius for the community; determining a level of trust for the first node in the community based on the number of degrees of separation between the first node and another node in the community; and if a message is received by the first node in the community from the other node in the community, employing the level of trust associated with the other node to determine if the message is to be delivered to at least one trusted folder associated with the first node, as set forth in independent claims 1, 16, 17 and 19. Claims 1-17 and 19 are allowed because of the combination of other limitations and the limitations listed above.

The examiner finds the Applicant's arguments on pages 9-10 of the Remarks filed on 06/06/2006 and page 9 of the Remarks filed on 09/21/2006 to be persuasive. The Applicant argued in substance that the combination of prior art of records fail to disclose the features of the invention including determining an adaptive cut-off radius for

a community based in part on a rate of growth for membership in the community that is separated by a first degree of separation, wherein a cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off radius is adapted to be relatively large if the rate of growth is relatively high, and wherein the cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off degree of separation for the cut-off radius is adapted to be relatively small if the rate of growth is relatively low, as claimed in the invention to allow the system to determine a cut-off limit that can be set for the maximum number of degrees of separation from a user, hence by this way, email addresses beyond this cut-off limit probably could not be included in the community-based green list (CGL) without contributing to a degradation in the effectiveness of CGL filtering (see **Remarks filed on 06/06/2006, pages 9-10 and see Specification, page 9, lines 6-12 and page 12, lines 6-15**).

6. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should clearly labeled "Comments on Examiner's Amendment".

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7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Quang N. Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-3886.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's SPE, Rupal Dharia, can be reached at (571) 272-3880. The fax phone number for the organization is (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


RUPAL DHARIA
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER